



**U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement**

March 3, 2005

# News Release

## **FORMER DANBURY RESIDENT ADMITS SMUGGLING ALIENS FOR PROFIT**

NEW HAVEN, CONN—Kevin J. O'Connor, United States Attorney for the District of Connecticut, announced that Amit Patel, age 37, a native and citizen of India who resided in Danbury, Connecticut, pleaded guilty today to a charge of human smuggling and admitted that he brought an alien into the United States for financial gain. Senior United States District Judge Ellen Bree Burns accepted Patel's plea of guilty this morning in New Haven.

On September 21, 2004, a federal grand jury sitting in New Haven returned a 44-count Indictment against Patel, alleging that on several occasions from in or about June 2003 through in or about April 2004, Patel received from his co-conspirator couriers, aliens who used fraudulent travel documents to enter the United States from Great Britain. After receiving these aliens, it is alleged that Patel either transported them to a location within the United States, or arranged for their transport within the United States. On certain occasions, it is alleged that Patel then mailed the aliens' travel documents back to his co-conspirators in Great Britain.

Fourteen of Patel's alleged co-conspirators are named in the Indictment. They have been arrested and are being prosecuted in Great Britain.

Today, Patel pleaded guilty to Count 16 of the Indictment. During the guilty plea proceeding, Patel specifically admitted that he brought an alien into the United States for financial gain.

Judge Burns has scheduled sentencing for May 23, 2005, at which time Patel faces a mandatory minimum term of imprisonment of three years, a maximum term of imprisonment of 10 years and a fine of up to \$250,000. Patel is also subject to deportation at the conclusion of his term of imprisonment.

"This office is committed to prosecuting any individual who willfully ignores our immigration laws," U.S. Attorney O'Connor stated. "In this age, persons who place profit above our country's need to protect our borders should prepare to spend time in federal prison."

“Smugglers do not care about who they sneak in or what their intentions are,” stated Robin M. Avers, Special Agent-in-Charge, ICE New England. “That’s why ICE is committed to identifying and dismantling human smuggling operations worldwide. The success of this case is directly attributed to the outstanding cooperation between law enforcement partners here and abroad.”

U.S. Attorney O’Connor stated that this investigation is ongoing, and that the individuals who Patel is alleged to have assisted in illegally entering the United States are actively being sought by law enforcement.

On June 24, 2004, Patel was arrested on a civil immigration charge when he was discovered to be illegally residing in the United States. He has been detained since his arrest.

This case is being investigated by Special Agents of United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) under the Department of Homeland Security, and Detectives from the National Crime Squad of England and Wales. The Danbury Police Department and the United Kingdom Immigration Service assisted in the investigation.

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Krishna R. Patel, who is not related to the defendant or any other individuals named in the Indictment.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*